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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION

1981 session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 49th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 19 February 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. SUY (Under-Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel)

Chairman: Mr. GONZALEZ GALVEZ (Mexico)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (continued)

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had agreed to elect its Chairman for the 1981 session from among the members of the Latin American Group, and said he understood that the candidate from that Group was Mr. González Gálvez (Mexico).

2. Mr. GÜNEY (Turkey) said that the Group of West European and other States fully supported the candidature of Mr. González Gálvez.

3. Mr. González Gálvez (Mexico) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

4. Mr. González Gálvez (Mexico) took the Chair.

5. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to proceed to the election of three Vice-Chairmen.

6. Mr. GÜNEY (Turkey), speaking on behalf of the Group of West European and other States, nominated Mr. Broms (Finland) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

7. Mr. OLSZOWSKI (Poland), speaking on behalf of the East European Group, nominated Mr. Hucke (German Democratic Republic) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

8. Mr. Broms (Finland) and Mr. Hucke (German Democratic Republic) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that the election of the third Vice-Chairman would be postponed until a candidate had been agreed on in the course of informal consultations. He hoped that a nomination would be forthcoming as soon as possible. It also remained for the Committee to elect a Rapporteur.

10. Mr. CHATURVEDI (India) said that the Asian and African Groups hoped to submit nominations at the following meeting for the two remaining offices.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.182/L.23)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

11. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the case of two of the topics before it, namely, the maintenance of peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, the Committee had available to it a number of documents - some of them drawn up at the Manila session - which could provide a useful basis for further discussion. The third topic - rationalization of existing procedures of the United Nations - was less well-defined and had not been dealt with at the preceding session. However, it was important that the issue should not be left aside, and he therefore suggested that a small working group should be established to hold consultations and to draw up a summary of useful proposals.

(The Chairman)

12. He recalled that, as his country's representative at the preceding session, he had suggested that the Committee should not wait until it had completed its mandate before making recommendations on specific topics to the General Assembly.

13. Mr. ROSENSTOCK (United States of America) requested clarification with regard to the status of documentation on the topic of peaceful settlement of disputes. He wondered whether the draft Manila declaration was the only relevant document available to the Committee.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that he himself, speaking as the representative of Mexico at the preceding session, had expressed the view that the Manila declaration was incomplete and should be supplemented by other proposals.

15. Mr. MUSEUX (France) said that, at the Manila session, his delegation had submitted to the Secretariat a draft handbook on the peaceful settlement of disputes but there had not been time to have it circulated. He hoped that that could now be done.

16. Mr. ROMANOV (Secretary of the Committee) said that, if members agreed, the Secretariat would issue the text of the draft handbook for circulation as an official document of the Committee.

17. With regard to the organization of work, he suggested that, in the interests of economy and flexibility, it might be possible to dispense with interpreting services during some consultations on certain topics, since a more informal atmosphere was often conducive to greater progress in drafting constructive proposals.

18. Mr. MUSEUX (France) said that the interpreters played a very important role, particularly when the Committee was engaged in drafting a text. His delegation's position of principle concerning the languages used in the Committee was well known. The issue should not be prejudged at the present time.

19. Mr. FEDOROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation often found it extremely difficult to work without interpretation, particularly when discussions on matters of substance were not merely a means of exchanging views but were part of the process of drafting specific documents. While his delegation might be prepared to agree to the use of a single language for procedural consultations and the like, it must insist that, where consultations were expected to lead to the actual formulation of texts, the Chairman should ensure that interpretation services were available; otherwise, confusion would ensue.

20. As for the suggestion that a small working group should be established, it was true that the use of small groups of that kind facilitated the production of documents; however, since the documents then had to be considered by the present body as a whole, some duplication of work resulted. It would therefore be desirable, particularly when dealing with specific fundamental topics, for the work to be done in a working group of the whole.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the provisional agenda contained in document A/AC.182/L.23.

22. The agenda was adopted.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that, although he was not setting any deadline, delegations which intended to revise any proposals or working papers they had submitted or to submit new documents should inform him as soon as possible.

24. Mr. CHEBELEU (Romania), supported by Mr. MUSEUX (France), suggested that the Committee should adjourn so that delegations could hold informal consultations on the suggestions made at the current meeting.

25. Mr. ROSENSTOCK (United States of America) agreed, since that would expedite the Committee's work. Once the election of the Bureau had been completed at the next meeting, the Chairman would be able to discuss with the other officers how the Committee might proceed, in the light of any suggestions made by delegations during the informal consultations.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.